

Message Text

SECRET

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15

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PRS-01 L-02 /047 W

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P 241133Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSG BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 168

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

CINCPAC

S E C R E T BANGKOK 1429

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, TH, PFOR

SUBJECT: US FORCE LEVELS IN THAILAND

REF: STATE 016499

1. ANSWER TO SECOND O&A IN REFTEL REQUIRES ALTERATION TO FIT CIRCUMSTANCES HERE. SECOND SENTENCE OF ANSWER SHOULD READ QTE ACTUAL IN-COUNTRY STRENGTH IS SOMEWHAT LOWER THAN THAT, THOUGH THE FIGURES MAY VARY SLIGHTLY FROM DAY TO DAY UNQTE. IF ASKED APPROXIMATE CURRENT FIGURE FOR IN-COUNTRY STRENGTH, REPLY SHOULD BE QTE ABOUT 25,000 UNQTE.
2. ON BACKGROUND WITH LOCAL AND FOREIGN NEWSMEN HERE QTE ABOUT 25,000 UNQTE WAS USED AS IN-COUNTRY TROOP LEVEL AT END OF 1974. THAT FIGURE HAS APPEARED IN LOCAL PRESS AND WIRE SERVICE STORIES FROM BANGKOK.
3. USE BY USG SPOKESMEN OF TROOP LEVEL AUTHORIZED HERE, WITHOUT GIVING APPROXIMATE NUMBER ACTUALLY IN COUNTRY IF ASKED, WOULD SEEMINGLY CONTRADICT FIGURES MEDIA ALREADY HAVE PUBLISHED. CONSEQUENTLY, MEDIA WOULD QUICKLY INFER THAT US PLANNING INCREASE TROOPS HERE IN REACTION TO NEARBY EVENTS. AMERICAN REPORTERS

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HERE ASSIDUOUSLY TRACKING ANY HINT AND MANY RUMORS OF

US RESPONSE IN THAILAND TO INTENSIFIED ENEMY ACTIVITIES
IN CAMBODIA AND SOUTH VIETNAM.

4. ANY INDICATION THAT WE ARE BUILDING UP PRESENCE
HERE WITHOUT ACTUALLY DOING SO WOULD CREATE NEEDLESS
CONFUSION, PERPLEX THE MEDIA, STIMULATE THE READY IRE
OF A SEGMENT OF THAI PUBLIC OPINION AND RESULT IN
CONSIDERABLE FLAK AT A SENSITIVE TIME IN US-THAI
RELATIONS.
KINTNER

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

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